



PRESS RELEASE

Internal Revenue Service - Criminal Investigation Cincinnati Field Office *Special Agent in Charge Kathy A. Enstrom*

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WOMAN SENTENCED IN TAX REFUND SCAM

CINCINNATI, OHIO -- Donita Shields, 38, of Kansas City, Missouri was sentenced to 24 months in prison and three years of supervised release on one count of filing false claims for federal income tax refunds with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Final restitution to the IRS will be determined at a later date. Shields pleaded guilty to the aforementioned charge on September 8, 2014.

Carter M. Stewart, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Ohio and Kathy A. Enstrom, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, Cincinnati Field Office announced the guilty plea entered on Monday before U.S. District Judge Timothy S. Black.

According to court documents, Donita Shields resides in Kansas City, Missouri, but had family and friends in the Cincinnati, Ohio area and frequently traveled to and from the Cincinnati, Ohio area. Between 2009 and 2011 Shields orchestrated a scheme to defraud the IRS by creating fake Form's W-2 for third parties and filing fraudulent income tax returns for the 2008 through 2010 income tax years. Shields solicited individuals to pose as employees for the purpose of filing false income tax returns and claiming fraudulent income tax refunds.

Shields created the Form's W-2 for the purported employees by using the names of entities associated with Shields and her family as the employers. These companies did not employ the individuals identified on the income tax returns and did not pay any tax withholdings to the IRS or make any payroll payments consistent with the Form's W-2 or the income tax returns.

Shields created a fake Form W-2 for an individual that falsely represented that the individual had specific wages and tax withholdings. Shields then helped the individual file an income tax return and split the income tax refund from the IRS.

In 2010, Shields prepared and electronically filed the false third party income tax returns for Cincinnati, Ohio residents from her home in Kansas City, Missouri. At least two of the income tax returns caused income tax refunds to be wired to debit cards located in Cincinnati, Ohio.

"Donita Shields systematically defrauded the government and the taxpaying public," said Kathy A. Enstrom, Special Agent in Charge, IRS Criminal Investigation, Cincinnati Field Office. "At the IRS, protecting taxpayer money is a matter we take very seriously. IRS Criminal Investigation will continue to vigorously pursue those who unjustly enrich themselves by preparing false claims for refunds."

This case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Timothy S. Mangan and was investigated by special agents of IRS-Criminal Investigation.

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